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# Cantate Mariæ

DAVID BEARNE, S.J.

# CANTATE MARIÆ

ROEHAMPTON :

PRINTED BY JOHN GRIFFIN.

# Cantate Mariæ

## MEDITATIONS IN SONG

BY

DAVID BEARNE, S.J.

LONDON:
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Nos cum prole pia
Benedicat Virgo Maria

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# To Mary Immaculate.

I.

WHAT is the melody that I can bring to thee,
Queen of Creation, Empress of Heaven?
O for the psalm of a Seraph to sing to thee,
O for the song of the Angel-Seven
Who stand in the marvellous mystery,
And chant of thy glorious history,
While garlands unfading they weave and they fling to thee,
Rose-wreaths white as the snow wind-driven.

II.

Thy beauty so God-like, how shall man measure it?
O measureless mine of manifold gold!
Immaculate purity, how doth God treasure it,
His one white lily from earth's dark mould;
O great and magnificent verity
Of thy spotless, ineffable chastity,
How may the Cherubim tell of the pleasure it
Gives to the Godhead, and glory untold!

III.

Might of God's Mother! creation hath bowed to it,
Nature hath owned its unceasing sway;
Legions of Lucifer's angels have cowed to it,
The terrible army in battle array;
O earth, without measure or dysphony,
Sing on in unending symphony!
Let the light of the noon and the night shout aloud to it,
The midnight moon and the dawning day!

IV.

Let the riches of earth, sea, and sky, be unrolled to thee,
Mother of Loveliness, Light, and Song!
Though the splendours of Paradise God doth unfold to thee,
Earth's beauty and grace to thee belong;
We bind, and we bring, and we give to thee
All things in a sweet captivity,
The wealth of the ends of the world is all told to thee,
And all to thy majesty hasten and throng.

# Regina Sæculorum.

I.

Strew sweetness for the passing of the Queen!
By the high hedgerows white with bridal bloom
Woven of whitethorn; and the arras green
Broidered with amber of the April loom,—
Our Lady passeth, and will pass!
Ah, nay;
Falls the fruit blossom, fades the meadow grass,
But Mary passeth not as doth the May.

II.

Touch the white torches with a flake of flame,
Sing honeyed psalmody from prime till noon,
Make stream and meadow murmur Mary's name
Till floats upon the blue the May-night moon!
The month is setting, and will set:
Ah, pray
The Moon of May be far from waning yet,
And Mary pass not with the passing May.

# Our Lady of Love.

"Her have I loved and have sought her out from my youth, and have desired to take her for my spouse, and I became a lover of her beauty." (Wisdom viii. 2.)

THROUGH all the storms thy name the throstle trilled
From topmost finial of the budding larch,
While breath of opening violets faintly filled
The dolorous winds of March.

Of thee the ousel's Easter carol rang
Within the milk-white pear and cherry bloom,
Until the silver rain of evening sang
From out the April gloom.

But May, with full-voiced chorus of all birds
Aloft in leafy tribunes blossom-dress'd,
Makes Mary-music as young Summer girds
The land from east to west.

The blossom falls, a shower of perfumed snow,
As on the whitethorn bough the birds alight;
Faint shadows of thy sweetness come and go
From morn till moonlit night.

For since, dear Lady, thou hast won my love
And hast become sole Mistress of my heart,
Me no created beauty more may move
In which thou hast no part.

# The Visitation.

"And Mary abode with her about three months."

I.

WHILE crimson roses blush,
Thro' summer's golden tides,
Within that holy hush
Our Blessed Lady bides;
Hostess, alike, and Guest
Remain in prayerful rest
And glad thanksgiving for the secret each one hides.

II.

Within white, hallowed walls
Our Lady dear remains,
While bird to birdie calls
Thro' softly falling rains;
Hostess, alike, and Guest,
Awaiting God's behest,
Sing soft Magnificats with silver-sweet refrains.

III.

All heavenly the life
That Maid and Matron know;
Such sacred fervours rife,
Such graces overflow
In Hostess and in Guest!
For oh! in Mary's Breast
The lasting Life and Light and Love of Jesus glow.

# A Legend of the Nativity.

I.

The chilly, wind-swept stable-home
A Holy Temple hath become,
And Mary worships at the shrine
Of Emmanuel Divine.
Prostrate, adoring, kisses meet
She presseth to His sacred feet
Who lieth where the beasts have trod,
While in great awe she doth repeat—
"My God! my God!"

II.

The cattle's straw-strewn stable-home
A Royal Palace hath become;
Before Him, throned upon the mow,
Again our Lady sweet doth bow,
In homage kissing His dear hand
Who earth and Heaven doth command,
While in great rapture doth she sing
With all the choiring angel band—
"My King! my King!"

III.

But now the stable hath become
The Holy Infant's earthly home,
And Mary stoops to lift and hold
And fondly to her bosom fold
This Child of glory and of grace,
And shower soft kisses on His face:
"My Love! my own most precious One!
Come to Thy Mother's dear embrace—
*My Son! my Son!*"

## Kings to the Queen.

KINGS to the King!
Kings to the Queen who Jesus bore!
Bow low at the offering,
Since such a Regal King
Hath never reigned on earth before;
And though for little space
Our world He deigns to grace,
All royal shall earth be for evermore.

Gold to the King!
Gold to the Queen who Him doth hold!
Gold that is thrice refined,
His Infant Head to bind,
That is by Seraphs aureoled.
May He not have His own
Who hath such meekness shown?
From jewelled coffers pour the shining gold!

Sweets to the King!
Sweets to the Mother, Queen, and Maid!
All that the earth doth bear
Of precious perfume rare
Shall at His living throne be laid:
Sweets from the rose-filled East
To Kingly Christ the Priest,
Now and for aye with sweeter praise be paid!

Myrrh to the King!
And myrrh to His Belovèd One!
Since she unto her breast
Hath held Him to His rest,
He low and high alike hath won:
Such myrrh is Mary's bliss,
Receiving kiss for kiss,
While to His odours kings and shepherds run.

# The Purification.

LONG days ago the Magi sought
  Thro' desert roads their eastern way;
Hath faded now the star that brought
  Them where King Jesus lay.
    The Royal Gem
    Of Bethlehem
Is carried to His Temple's shrine,
    *Nunc dimittis!*
The Prophet clasps the Child Divine.

Our altar lights and lilies shine
  Around the Rood where Jesus hangs;
His Blood He hath poured out for wine,
  Hath borne death's bitter pangs
    Since Simeon bless'd
    And soft caress'd
The Babe of Heaven, and sang his strain,
    *Nunc dimittis!*
Yet we may hear that hymn again;

May contemplate the holy rite,
  And stand beside our Lady sweet,
Bearing the Church's blessed light
  As we her Darling greet;
    May swell the note
    That high doth float,
And Simeon's canticle prolong,
    *Nunc dimittis!*
Love! this be life's last Compline-song!

# The Three Days' Loss.

"I sought Him whom my soul loveth, I sought Him, but found Him not."

KNOW ye not where He roveth,
My Child so sweet and rare,
He whom my fond heart loveth,
My Darling, lily-fair?

Not there my Boy doth dally
Where palms and olives grow;
Nor in the vine-clad valley
Where peaceful waters flow.

Not where the shepherd leadeth
His flock to pastures green,
Nor where the young hart feedeth,
Is He, my Jesus, seen!

II.

"I will arise and will go about the city: in the streets and the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loveth."

I passed thro' grove and garden
As broke the morning light,
I sought the city warden
And watchmen of the night.

For sake of sweetest pity
Be to a mother kind!
I searched the Holy City,
I sought but might not find.

My tears with grief were frozen
For loss of my life's Love;
One out of thousands chosen,
My only One, my Dove!

III.

"I to my Beloved, and His turning is towards me. Come, my Beloved, let us go forth into the fields, let us abide in the villages."

The Temple courts that hold Him
At length I trembling gain,
My mother-arms enfold Him,
My tears upon Him rain.

Within the gates I find Him,
Within the House of Prayer,
In my embrace I bind Him
Whose life is all my care.

His words my heart have moved,
Deep words of mystery:
Yet—I to my Beloved,
And He, my Love, to me!

# A Dream of Nazareth.

I DREAMED that daylight waned in Nazareth town,
And that, nor seeking sport nor any toy,
Straightway to Mary's side the Holy Boy
Did run. With wistful look He kneeleth down
Pointing His sacred hand all bruised and brown
With day-long toil and labour's rough employ,
To His poor tunic which the tools destroy:
Anigh His breast is torn and rent the gown.

Sharp pang of pain in Mary's mother-heart,
As her pure hands encircle His sweet form;
Poignant the grief and sore the sudden smart,
Sad presage of the scene when red and warm
The Blood shall ebb, and that fair Heart will part
What time both man and nature rage and storm.

# Jesus and Mary.

"The words of His mouth I have hid in my bosom. . . . And when He shall have fulfilled His will in me, many other like things are also at hand with Him. . . . When I consider Him I am made pensive with fear." (Job. xxxiii.)

WIDOWED! but not yet childless; for He stands
In boyhood's bloom who is her Love and Life,
Fast bound to her by strongest filial bands,
She held by Him in whom all grace is rife.

Widowed, but not alone. His pure life spent
Who was her guardian-husband and her guide—
To Him in whom all loves are merged and blent
She clingeth, who is Mother, Sister, Bride.

O white and ruddy is her Darling now;
But whiter far and ruddier at that None
When His dear Head upon the wood shall bow,
And Mary standeth in her grief alone.

Her head upon the Boy's sweet Heart doth rest,
The Mother leaneth to her loving Son:—
Heavy His thorn-rent Brow upon her breast
What time Redemption by His Blood is won.

# Mater Gelu Constricta.

I.

THE bitter chill, sweet Mother, on the way,
The white and wintry way to Bethlehem;
The chillier welcome as they say thee nay,—
Spurning alike the Casket and the Gem!

The withering winds that sweep within the cave
And wrap the Royal Infant at thy breast!
Thy rain of joyful tears which warmly lave
The crib as thou dost lay Him to His rest!

II.

O chillier far the fair and frozen snow
Of death-cold limbs upon thy trembling knee,
When from His Wounds the Blood had ceased to flow,
And thou wert biding still on Calvary.

Again the Mother doth her Son embrace:
But soon the chilly cave and swathing bands
Will hide the deep Heart-wound and furrowed face,
The ice-cold riven Feet, and piercèd Hands.

His cries upon the Rood's rough bed are hushed:
The stricken Mother waileth now; and though
The fount be dry from which His life-stream gushed,
The blood of Mary's soul doth freely flow.[1]

[1] "Tears are the life-blood of the soul." (*St. Augustine.*)

# The Risen Bridegroom.

His Mystic Rose fresh sweetness doth unfold,
Beneath the moon His Ivory Tower is gleaming,
Waiting she stands, His beauteous House of Gold,
From Wisdom's Seat clear light is strongly beaming.

"Behold He cometh!" sing the quiring stars;
"O foolish souls that go not out to meet Him!"
The Virgin-Bride alone the door unbars,
Comes forth with love's replenished lamp to greet Him.

The door is shut, and she the Heavenly Bride
Her risen Son in rapture is caressing,
While He unto His sacred riven side
The Mother of Fair Love is softly pressing.

Great splendour in our Lady's lowly room!
Lo, where five ruddy fountains once were welling
From Hands and Feet and Heart—as flies the gloom,
Five living lamps the Paschal moon excelling!

Not ours to linger here: until the morn
With Magdalen our vigil shall be speeding;
Within the garden when the day is born
Among the lilies will our Love be feeding.

# Our Lady of the Pax.

WHERE the white Paschal moon throws peaceful beams
On Mary closëd eyelids wet with weeping,
Doth music mingle with her midnight dreams,
Waking the Mother while the land lies sleeping?

No seraph's harping sounds: the heavens are mute:
No shepherds hear the Pax of angel-singers;
But sudden on her Sorrows' seven-stringed lute,
Her beating heart, Love lays His shining fingers.

No choiring band, but Christ the great High Priest
Sings "Peace be to you," on His new-birth morning,
And gives the ecstatic Pax on this sweet feast,
The rapturous kiss His Mother's brow adorning.

"Arise, My glory!" chimes the Sacred Heart,
"Arise, my loved one, I, thy Son, am risen!"
And swiftly doth she rise to hymn her part
Since He, her Life, hath broken Death's cold prison.

"O Love, my heart is ready, I will rise,
My heart is ready for the Easter singing,
Since on my face Thy risen splendour lies,
And in my ears Thy chant of love is ringing."

All heavenly is that chamber's Paschal-Shrine,
Where Mary with her Son in bliss reposes:
O harp and lute! O psaltery divine!
O radiant Wounds like glory-streaming roses!

# Regina Sacratissimi Rosarii.

"We will make thee chains of gold inlaid with silver." (Canticle of Canticles i. 10.)

I.

We would make thee chains, sweet Lady, chains of worth untold,
All of a lustrous ore the ages may never dim;
Glittering link upon link of silver and of gold,
The gold of thy Son's own prayer, the silver of Gabriel's hymn.

II.

But made and offered by us—how unmeet for thee, Mother most fair!
Gold with its brightness dulled by hands not wholly pure;
And yet, for the love of a wayward son thou, Mother, wilt care,
And the all but worthless gift thy pitying love may secure.

III.

For a touch of thy virginal hand will remove the stain and the rust,
And our gifts become holy and pure if of prayer thou breathest a breath:
Ah, pitiful Mother! thou knowest thy children are ashes and dust,
Dust and ashes, and doomed from our birth to the darkness of death.

IV.

So take these Rosaries, Mother, and with them bind us fast;
Make of these beads firm fetters for linking us closer to thee;
Loving, obedient sons, we never have been in the past,
But now thy dutiful sons and slaves we are longing to be.

V.

Prisoners of holy Hope, wearing thy beautiful bond—
Glorious slavery, sweeter than all the false freedom of sin!
Lightsome the shackles fast locked on our limbs by a Mother so fond,
Pledge of a lasting liberty thou wilt help us to win!

VI.

Fetters that melody make as we move thro' this Desert of fear,
Golden tone of the *Pater*, the *Ave's* silver chime,
With ever the cadence of *ora pro nobis* until we hear
The peal of the heavenly bells ringing Eternal Prime.

# A Shrine for Mary.

"All gold in comparison with her is as a little sand." (Wisdom vii. 9.)

WHAT for my Love, and of my love, a proof?
For her, my Queen, a shrine of amethyst
Seen through the sheeny threads the sunbeams twist
Like silken shimmer of a splendid woof,
Like cloud-film clinging from aloft—aloof
When all the ether is a silvern mist
Shining like lake with noontide glory kiss'd—
Four walls of azure 'neath a crystal roof!

Lady! the votive offerings at such shrine
Must needs be very precious, costly, rare;
Jewels are dim and gold no longer fine
When laid before thee at thy altar-stair:
Mary! my vows and purposes divine—
Surely in these thou hast a Mother's share!

# Causa Nostræ Lætitiæ.

"He that loveth her, loveth life; and they that watch for her shall embrace her sweetness." (Ecclesiasticus iv. 13.)

HOLLOW the mirth, the gladness shallow,
The soul's sad garden barren and fallow
Where faileth thy smile to brighten and hallow—
Cause of our Joy!

Hope slumbers if we lose thy loving,
Bitter the pain of thy reproving
When false joy our weak hearts is moving—
Cause of our Joy!

O never delight from life we'll borrow
To mar thy face with a mother's sorrow;
Be now and through each swift to-morrow—
Cause of our Joy!

# Rosa Mystica.

Rare Rose that bloometh through the changing year,
White Rose of Wonder shedding perfume clear,
A mystic sweetness o'er the Church's day.

Wan Rose of Winter, shining through the snow,
White Rose of Bethlehem, thy petals show
Whiter than whitest flakes that mar thy way!

Wet White Rose dripping with the Red Rose Dew,
White blossom changing to a lovelier hue,
As over Calvary the lightnings play!

Rose of the Resurrection midnight-morn,
For thee a richer bloom of beauty's born
Since Sharon's Rose hath flashed o'er thee His ray!

Rose of the Heavens, white angels fold thee round,
And thou within God's Paradise hast found
The shelter of a Sempiternal May!

## Mary's Message.

You come to me—
But will you follow where I lead?
We had small shelter in our need,
The cold snows wrapped us drearily,
Yet none in Bethlehem would heed
The travellers toiling wearily,
Hast courage, thou, my child to be?

You come to me,
But will you follow while I tread
The hill whereon my Jesus bled,
And hear Him in His bitter crying,
(So many followed who have fled)
And see my gentle Son a-dying?
Hast courage, thou, my child to be?

You come to me,
For you would follow to the Land
Where rapture reigns, where worship grand
Swells outward to eternity;
Yes—you may clasp my mother-hand,
But think on my Maternity,
Then courage take my child to be!

# Our Lady of the Rosary.

I.

ALL joyful, and the Cause of Joy,
Since Gabriel's psalm saluted thee,
And in thy womb the Holy Boy
Began His sacred Rosary!
O joyful at the midnight birth,
And joyful at the Prophet's hymn,
Yea, joyful as the wise of earth
In wonder hear and answer Him!

II.

All sorrowful, and filled with woe,
Ever of dolours thou art Queen,
Since that lone night thy tears did flow,
And in the Death March thou wert seen;
Nay, 'mid the gloom of Calvary
In nameless sorrow thou didst stand,
The red beads of thy Rosary
Slow dropping from His bleeding Hand!

III.

All glorious, and of His Saints
The glory and the perfect crown!
Earth's moon in Paschal fulness faints,
His shining Wounds its brightness drown;
The cloud receives Him from thy sight,
God's Paraclete with might doth come;
Twelve lonely years, and Seraphs bright
Swift bear thee for thy crowning—Home!

## At her Shrine.

For ever might we kneel in this dear place,
It seems nor sin could stain nor hell annoy—
So fair the beauty and so sweet the grace
Of Mary-Mother and her Holy Boy.

Here in the shadow of this May-time shrine
For us there is a daily blest employ—
To catch the beauty, human and divine,
Of Mary-Mother and her Heavenly Boy.

Past hurtful pleasures lie on life's highway
Like worthless fragments of a broken toy:
All lovely as a sempiternal May
Thy smile, dear Mother, Thine, most Holy Boy!

Mother, we pray false love may lose its lure,
And only love that doth not taint or cloy
May hold us—as the Spotless holds the Pure,
As thou, Immaculate, the Stainless Boy!

# A Boy's Hymn to Mary.

O MOTHER, hear the plea
  Of thy poor sinful one;
Unworthy though I be,
  Yet am I still thy son:
O Mary, with thy Jesus dear,
Be to thy children ever near!

My every fault and sin
  Beg Jesus to forgive;
May I His mercy win,
  And closer to Him live;
O Mary, with thy Jesus dear,
Be to thy children ever near!

Keep me from all defiled
  Wherever I may be;
Ne'er let me be beguiled
  By Satan's treachery:
O Mary, with thy Jesus dear,
Be to thy children ever near!

From perils of the night,
  From dangers of the day,
Our Lady, Queen of Light,
  Deliver me, I pray:
O Mary, with thy Jesus dear,
Be to thy children ever near!

Make all sad hearts to beat
With Heaven's holy mirth;
Gain for us, Mother sweet,
Some solace e'en on earth:
O Mary, with thy Jesus dear,
Be to thy children ever near!

And as I lowly bow
Before thy sacred charms,
Give me thy blessing now
With Jesus in thine arms:
O Mary, with thy Son most dear,
Be to thy children ever near!

# Our Lady of the Boys.

In snow-white marble Mary stands,
  Gold-crowned as Empress and as Queen
Of all the heavens, and all the lands
  That angel-eyes have ever seen:
Upon the pole of this glad earth,
  Her Kingly Jesus doth she poise,
Smiling upon her children's mirth—
    Our Lady of the Boys.

She is so fair and white and sweet,
  This gentle Queen and Mother-Maid,
That players in the game's full heat
  In spirit seek her hallowed shade,
Longing, if but for one wee space,
  To leave the laughter and the noise
And whisper, "Mary, full of grace,
    Our Lady of the Boys!"

She is the Lady of their heart,
  They wear her favours day and night,
Each longs to play her page's part,
  Aspires to be her squire and knight;
They loathe all lower loves, they hate
  Whatever their white Queen annoys,
Early they kneel to her, and late,
    Our Lady of the Boys.

She marks each truant for her own,
Over the wanderer she keeps
Long vigil through the night hours lone,
Over the wayward oft she weeps;
She woos them from the highway wild,
Fain would she wean them from Hell's toys,
She hath no mind to lose *one* child—
Our Lady of the Boys.

She is the Mother of them all,
The heart of each she seeks to gain,
On bad and good her blessings fall,
As on the earth falls summer rain;
Each name she whispers to her Son,
Praying the love that never cloys
May be the meed of every one—
Our Lady of the Boys.

She is the Mistress of their sport,
Their Teacher in sweet Wisdom's chair,
Their Pleader at the great High Court,
Their guide unto the Golden Stair;
She loves to listen as they pray
To her, the Cause of all their joys,
And chant her anthems day by day—
Our Lady of the Boys.

# Our Lady of the Fountain.

Sparkle in the sunshine golden leaping waters where
Scent of citron, breath of roses, fill the noontide air;
Gleams the marble of the fountain, white and cool and
fair.

Changing chimes from soaring steeple o'er the trellised
wall
Mingle with the silver ripple of the water-fall:
Rings the *Ave* of the Angel o'er the lilies tall.

Wren and linnet, lark and mavis, join in chorus high,
All the budding bell-like blossoms swing in mute reply:
Chant of Sext from priestly voices in the cloister nigh.

Mirth and music laughing, ringing all that sunlit day:
Night-stars look into the garden where the viols play
Drowning chords of nobler music where the pale monks
pray.

Slower droops the soothing water at the noon of night,
Loometh fair the flowing fountain in the wan moonlight:
Loveliest is that garden olden wrapt in mystic white.

Buttress, belfry, tower and turret all in shadow lie;
Comes the sacred chant of Matins in the minster nigh:
In my garden steeped in anguish, moaning, weeping, I.

Blush of dawn the orient decketh, glints through jewelled pane,
Clothed in meditative silence lies Our Lady's fane:
Hour of Prime so quickly cometh, and the organ's strain.

Gleam from wall and window-casement, martyr-histories,
Choirs of Confessors and Virgins, saintly ecstasies,
Visions of the Virgin-Mother, Christ's dear mysteries.

Where the sinner sues for mercy and the suppliant cry
Gains the willing ear of Mary, where the souls that die
Rise to life of grace and pardon—kneeling there am I.

Summer suns and leaves of Autumn, Winter's wealth of snow,
Sheaves of roses, sounds of singing, sweetly come and go:
Rising ever at the *Ave*, voices prayerful, low.

Playing children, boys and maidens, kneel and worship where
Mounted o'er the silvery water, tall and stately fair,
Stands *Our Lady of the Fountain* on the marble stair.

# Our Lady of the Lawn.

All night thro' starlit pools of sleep
  Full silently my bark hath sailed,
And o'er the tranquil waters deep
  God's moon hath waxed and paled.

And ever did the wan light kiss
  My slumbering and sightless eyes,
Filling my dreams with placid bliss
  That makes me gladsome rise.

For I have touched the shores of Day,
  And lying near me as I land
The tools of happy work and play
  Are ready to my hand.

And over all, so fair, so sweet,
  Of Joy and Purity the Dawn,
Looms, with the moon beneath her feet,
  Our Lady of the Lawn.

# Our Lady of the Birds.

His little arms are opened wide,
  He mutely calls to passers-by
A moment at His feet to bide,
  Beneath this leafy canopy:
She stands within the rustic shrine,
  The Mother of fair love and grace,
Holding her Saviour-Son divine,
  A smile upon her maiden face;
Her habit is of heavenly blue,
  Her wimple white as snowy curds,
Her feet of rose-and-lily hue—
  Our Blessed Lady of the Birds.

All day the throstle singeth high
  Above the Virgin-Mother's head,
The timid ousel cometh nigh
  With all his fledglings to be fed;
The finches chant beneath her eaves,
  The red-breast prattles at her knee,
The tiny wren his bosom heaves
  In rapturous bursts of minstrelsy;
The starlings list their leader's call,
  And leave the meadow and the herds
To feed below the southern wall
  That bounds Our Lady of the Birds.

Her acolytes are rosy boys
  Who tend her lily-littered dell,
Who tell her all their daily joys,
  And pray their *Aves* passing well;
They keep alight the lonely lamp
  Whose blue flame shineth out afar,
And at the gloaming love to camp
  Below its twinkling sapphire star;
While at the dawn, within the pale
  That this sweet sanctuary girds,
The shepherd-laddies kneel to hail
  Our dearest Lady of the Birds.

# At a City Shrine.

The far-off roar of life's loud thunder boometh,
Nearer, a throstle on the buttress sings;
For one short space no hopeful suppliant cometh,
No lover to our Lady *Ave* brings.

Upon the milk-white marble rose-leaves lying
Before the altar of the Virgin fair;
The crimson bloom sheds sweetness in its dying,
And mingles with the incense-perfumed air.

No antiphon doth rise with music solemn,
No diapason doth the casement shake;
Clothed all in shadow every carven column,
Low lights upon the altar fall and break.

Spent is the glare, yet jewelled glow prevaileth
Where shine the sainted, robed and aureoled,
And even while the sinking sunlight faileth
From out the west a glory is unrolled.

The far-off roar of life's loud thunder boometh,
Nearer, a high voice in the parclose sings:
Lo, through the dusk a youthful figure loometh:
A child unto his Mother *Salve* brings.

# A Lady Chapel.

THIS is the shrine of Mary Queen:
  Her heavenly picture hangs aloft
Below the rose-hued window's sheen,
  Above the towering tapers soft.

Her cedarn altar, damask-dight,
  Holds many an amethystine gem;
Its silken dossal, azure-white,
  Is crowned with sapphired diadem.

The tabernacle doors disclose
  Gold set in panels crystalline;
White lilies and the whiter rose
  In bowls of beaten silver shine.

The stalls are wrought of cypress pure,
  The singers clad in filmy lawn;
The roof-tree glows with hues as sure
  As autumn-wood or summer-dawn.

On marble stairs that rival snow
  Full freshly fallen from the skies,
Are spoils of all the flowers that blow
  Where sunshine never wanes nor dies.

O'er tapestries embroidered fair,
  Falling from clerestory-windows high,
Child-angels robed in raiment rare
  Over the purfled arras fly.

Bland incense-fumes from orient clime
  Mingle with breath of garden spoil,
Rosemary, marjoram, and thyme,
  Bestrow a floor no foot may soil.

On bells that all the valley fill—
  With bourdon-flow from pipes of gold—
From boy-throats pure as Alpine rill—
  Our Blessed Mother's Hours are told.

Hoar antiphon and *Salve* sweet,
  With chanted psalm and ancient hymn,
Lift souls unto God's Mercy-Seat
  And rapture of the Cherubim.

This is my Lady's hallowed shrine,
  Here will I linger morn and e'en;
Here is my Mother's home and mine,
  This is the Temple of my Queen.

# Song of the Spartan Boy.

"Expectans, expectavi."

Ah me, on the God to be born of a woman, pining I ponder
Through the glory-haunted day,
While the rays of the sun-shower play
On the mirror of river and lake and the film of the wan cloud's wonder.

For the gods of my country are fiercer than beasts when they starve in the forest,
Or when at the young day's gleam
They have drunk at the mountain stream,
Or, thirsting for blood, they roar and they rage when noontide is hottest.

Naked and chill am I bound by the sage to his terrible altar,
And the cords of the scourge are red
With the blood I proudly shed,
For never with fear or with dread may I shrink, may I faint or falter.

Lo, I heard a faint whisper like wooing of winds when the day is declining:
Was it sibyl or sage or seer?
Did the priest at the altar hear,
Or only the victim in terror unspoken there waiting reclining?

Of a Babe and a maiden it spoke, and the Babe the High
God of the living!
And of love, the law of the child;
Then the wind swept joyous and mild
Over the water-pools where the white starlight throbbed
in thanksgiving!

Will He come? shall I hear? shall I see? shall I know
of this unknown loving?
Will He hinder the priestly blows?
Hath He human blood that flows?
Will His baby-eyes weep when the victim's mute writhing
great horror is proving?

Ah then, on the God to be born of a woman, pining
I ponder,
And through the lonely night
I turn my aching sight
To the red-golden moonlight that floods the grape-clusters
and yellow sheaves yonder.

# Together.

CHANT of Lauds had ended in the Abbey chapel old,
(Apple-blossom paling in the spring-tide moon)
Brother John had wandered from the chancel's fretted fold
To pace the dewy orchard in the starlight clear and cold—
"Mother, thou dost surely grant the oft-requested boon!"

"I would that he were clothed as I, and safe in minster cell,"
(Apple-blossom falling 'neath the worn and waning moon)
"Or that he lay in holy soil in sound of sacring bell,—
Not yet art thou, my brother sweet, within the power of hell!
"O Lady Mary, deign to grant the oft-requested boon!"

Far away in lordly towers a laddie bright and young—
(Roses shedding perfume sweet beneath the summer noon)
Low lying in the pleasance fair his lute he deftly strung,
And in long, soft and bird-like notes most tenderly he sung
"My Lady-Mother, sweetly grant an oft-requested boon!"

"But I would that he were back again," all plaintively he cried,
(Roses dropping dewy leaves beneath the August noon)
"I would that he were back again and by his Percy's side,
My brother dearer far to me than bridegroom is to bride—
"O, Lady Mary, deign to grant an oft-requested boon!"

Pacing slow the orchard croft, a monk with streaming tears—
(Apples slowly mellowing beneath the autumn moon)
Tells in broken prayerful sighs his anguish and his fears,
Knowing that the Mother on her starry dais hears,
"O, Lady Mary, quickly grant my oft-requested boon!"

"I do not crave the sight of him nor yet a brother's kiss—"
(Apples dropping over-ripe beneath th' October moon)
"I only dread the foe may force his lovely soul to miss
The glory of the angel-choirs and Christ's eternal bliss;
But, Lady Mary, sweetly grant an oft-requested boon!"

Far away in snow-clad towers the bells to requiem clang,
(Winter winds blow drearily from early dawn till noon)
The tapers burn about a corpse, the white and purple
hang
Where late a little page would weep as tremblingly he
sang—
"My Lady-Mother soon will grant an oft-requested
boon."

The self-same eve a Dirge doth rise within the Abbey's
shade,
(Snow-flakes falling noiselessly beneath the winter
moon)
A cowlèd monk with closed eyes before the Altar's laid,
And the glad death-smile of Brother John shall never,
never fade,
For Lady Mary surely grants the oft-requested boon.

# The Rosary.

HERE on the low hill's summit sit we down
On this cool couch of carven marble pale,
Fronting the West wind blowing from the vale;
Yon Rose-farm lies between us and the town,
And ere the warm breeze wanders to the crown
Of this ascent, the bloom-filled field shall quail,
Yielding its perfume to the robber-gale
That with rare sweetness may our senses drown.

Nay! let such incense float to th' blue-white dome
That like a sea Heaven's harbour seems to gird;
And while the angels pass in reverie,
Unseen alike of man or flying bird—
Telling the beads of Mary's rosary
Our thoughts may mount unto her Golden Home.

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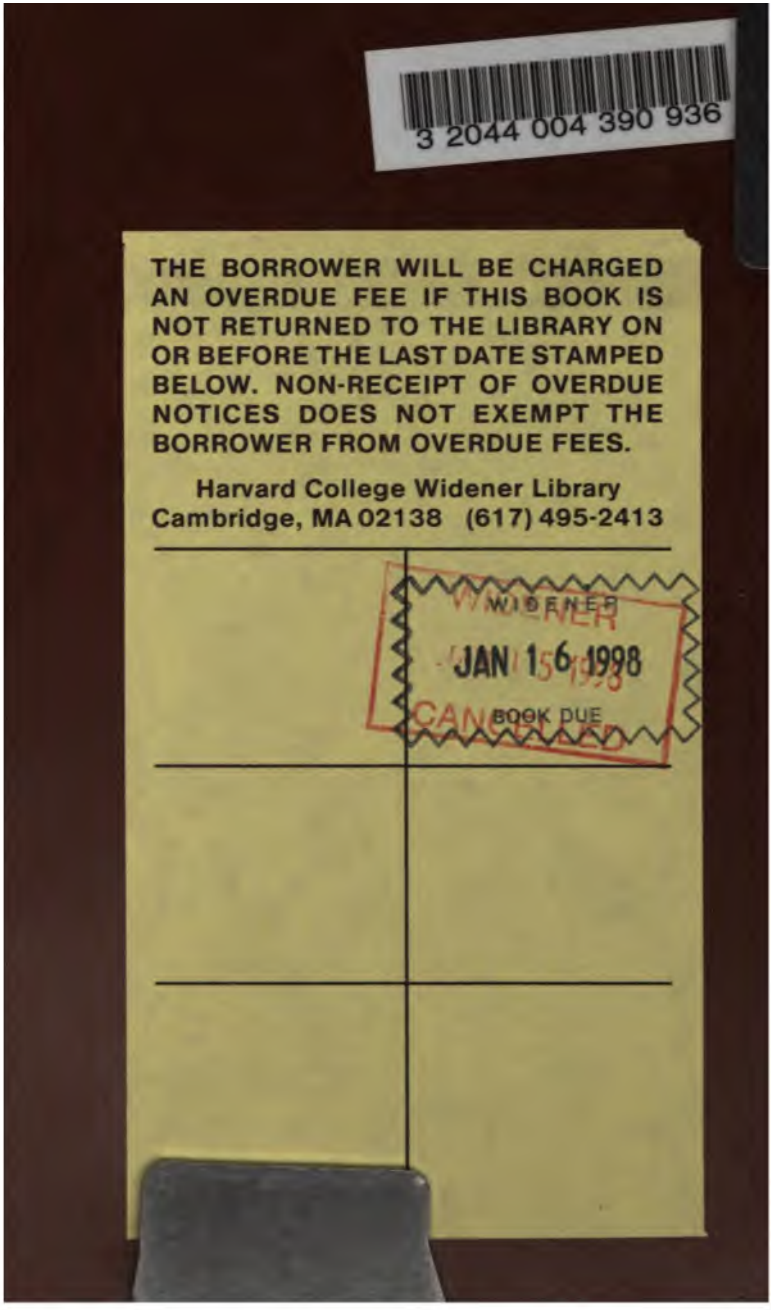
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